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ABSTRACT

Recent efforts to enhance humanities instruction in vocational curricula are important in light of: (1) the need to match technical competencies with an appreciation for human history and thoughts; (2) the fact that the majority of community college students are enrolled in vocational programs; and (3) the likelihood that the percentage of students in these programs will increase. While many efforts have centered around providing interdisciplinary humanities courses for vocational students, other tactics can be utilized. First, humanities instructors can apply the strategies that have proven effective in promoting vocational programs, including the use of advisory boards; the employment of humanities practitioners, such as librarians and artists, as part-time teachers; the incorporation of job-related topics in course work; and the provision of courses at the workplace. Second, the curriculum can be internationalized by providing humanities and vocational faculty with opportunities to travel abroad. Third, telecourses, in conjunction with faculty-led group discussions, can be used to associate humanities instruction and the community college in the public mind. Finally, humanities instructors can orient themselves to meeting the individual needs of lifelong learning and the collective needs of community development. Such efforts will strengthen both the institution and the humanities. (JP)

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UP WITH HUMANITIES: STRENGTHENING HUMANITIES INSTRUCTION IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES.

ROGER YARRINGTON

Paper presented at Desgado Community College
(New Orleans, LA, January 12, 1981)

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Address by Roger Yarrington
Delgado Community College
New Orleans, Louisiana
January 12, 1981

UP WITH HUMANITIES

Strengthening Humanities Instruction In Community Colleges

I appreciate the invitation I received from Frank Wright, vice president for academic affairs, and Margaret Montgomery, staff development coordinator, to talk to you today about strengthening the humanities in community colleges.

About two years ago I was here at Delgado to help kick off a regional workshop which was part of a national program by AACJC to develop community forums in community colleges as a strategy for citizen education. That program eventually led to more than 400 community colleges sponsoring community forums on issues ranging from "taxation" to "energy and the way we live." The National Endowment for the Humanities gave us financial assistance for those programs and all of the colleges in the programs drew on the humanities to inform the public forums. Delgado was one of the early participants in that national program. So, I know there has been some strong interest at Delgado in using the humanities to strengthen community education programs.

I was pleased to hear from Frank Wright that Delgado has made a commitment to give major emphasis to the humanities in its curriculum, especially in occupational and technical programs. And I have read the Delgado CORE

Curriculum proposal and it looks very good to me. I will be interested to hear how you move ahead with it and how it works.

A Bubbling Idea

There is an idea bubbling in community colleges across the country: instruction in the humanities needs to be strengthened, especially in occupational education curriculums.

Examples:

1. City University of New York has a grant from the Mellon Foundation to improve humanities teaching in community colleges. Fellowships will be given to community college teachers this Fall to study "Philosophy and Society." Applicants need not be teachers from the humanities. Teachers of other subjects into which the humanities might be introduced are encouraged to apply. The example cited is a teacher from one of the health-related fields might be interested in developing course materials on professional ethics.[1]

2. A similar idea is being developed at Borough of Manhattan Community College where a medical ethics course is being developed for nurses. And, at Genesee Community College ethics modules are being developed for courses in business, journalism, physics, and criminal justice. Both colleges are part of the Two-Year College Program of the National Humanities Faculty, an organization set up to offer professional assistance to colleges wishing to improve humanities instruction.[2]

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1 Adele Bahn, associate director, The Mellon Community Colleges Project, The Graduate School and University Center, City University of New York, 33 West 42nd Street, New York, New York 10036 (212-840-7545 or 212-790-4568).

2 Benjamin Ladner, executive director, National Humanities Faculty, 1266 Main Street, Concord, Massachusetts 01742 (212 617-369-7800).

3. Bristol Community College has a course called "The Criminal and Literature which is team taught by the Arts, English, and Languages chairman and the head of the criminal justice program.[3]

4. Shelby State Community College has developed a cultural anthropology course for nursing students to help them understand the different concerns and reactions they may experience when treating patients.[4]

5. An interdisciplinary humanities course which attracts approximately equal numbers of transfer and occupational students is offered at Valencia Community College. The course focuses on content and on identifiable humanistic skills that students develop through the course. Three interdisciplinary texts for community college students have been written by the instructors.[5]

6. The Community College Humanities Association, formed in October, 1979, has 800 members and is divided into five geographic divisions, each of which had a Fall meeting in 1980. They reported several common threads running through their discussions. One was interdisciplinary offerings in the humanities and another was relating the humanities more closely to career programs.[6]

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3 Paul Fletcher, chairman, Arts, English, and Languages, Bristol Community College, Fall River, Massachusetts, 02720 (617-678-2811).

4 Larry Schmucker, Shelby State Community College, Memphis, Tennessee, 38104 (901-528-6800).

5 Louis Schlegel, chair, Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies, Valencia Community College, Orlando, Florida 32802 (305-299-5000).

6 Donald Schmeltekopf, president, Community College Humanities Association, Union College, 1033 Springfield Avenue, Cranford, New Jersey 07016 (201-276-2600-ext. 346).

7. AACJC is currently conducting a project supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities to strengthen the humanities in occupational education programs in community colleges. The project grew out of one of the major recommendations of an AACJC national assembly on the state of the humanities in community colleges. Judy Jeffrey Howard is directing the project at AACJC. Teams from 60 community colleges will be brought together in intensive regional workshops to develop specific institutional plans on how to strengthen the humanities in their occupational curriculums. A report will be sent to all community colleges. [7]

An Appropriate Idea

The idea of strengthening the humanities in community colleges by developing humanities instruction in occupational education curriculums is legitimate, appropriate, and timely.

It is legitimate because we need skilled technicians in our society with highly-developed competencies that are matched by highly-developed feelings for the human qualities that make life important. We need technicians that not only understand electronics and chemistry and organizational charts for the bureaucracy but also understand human history and the thoughts of great writers and philosophers about why we are here and what it is we are trying to become.

It is appropriate because well over half of our students are in occupational curriculums now. The majority of students who start college start in community colleges. And the majority of the students in com-

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[7] Judy Jeffrey Howard, director, Strengthening Humanities in Occupational Curricula, American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, One Dupont Circle, N.W., Suite 410, Washington, D. C. 20036 (202-293-7050).

munity colleges are in occupational education. If these students are to receive any background in the humanities at the postsecondary level, the humanities are going to have to be integrated into occupational courses and curriculums.

And, it is timely to work on such an agenda because the percentage of students in occupational curriculums seems destined to increase. In fact, it is not overstating the case to say that integration of the humanities into occupational curriculums is overdue. In 1965 about 14 per cent of our students were in occupational education. Now about 60 per cent of our students are in such curriculums. Economic conditions in our country continue to push students of all ages toward preparation for jobs. And I doubt if that push is going to let up in the near future. Development of skilled manpower and womanpower for economic development, to keep our industry up to date and competitive in a world market-place, that is the assignment given to American education in the 80's. I expect the new Republican administration will see that role for education, just as many others now do.

Interdisciplinary Approach

I first began thinking about some of these things in 1971 when I was asked to make a presentation at the American Studies Association's annual meeting. Thinking about a challenge to present to professors in that interdisciplinary field of study it occurred to me to suggest that they could make a major contribution to community colleges by developing a course for occupational students that drew on American history, literature,

music, art, etc., to make it possible for students with very little time to study such things to get at least an introduction to the traditions and values of our own nation. I was afraid then, and I am still afraid, that many of our occupational students receive exposure to the humanities only on a hit-and-miss basis, selecting whatever electives happen to be available on the semester they happen to have time to take them.

Interdisciplinary humanities courses constructed especially for community college occupational education students, tailored to give a coherent overview in a short period of time, and, if possible, related to the student's specialized field of study, is an idea being worked on in many places -- as demonstrated by some of the examples I cited earlier -- but it is still a field of curriculum development out on the cutting edge. Most of the people doing the work still see themselves as engaged in an experiment. We still do not know how to do it as well as we should.

The Rockefeller Commission on the Humanities suggests that integrated approaches to the humanities may be particularly suited to community colleges. What the commission is suggesting is courses that combine and integrate various disciplines in the humanities with each other and with studies in other fields -- such as vocational courses.[8]

About three years ago I met with an advisory committee that looked at data Arthur Cohen and Florence Brawer were collecting on the state of the humanities in community colleges. Their data showed that the number of students in humanities courses was getting smaller, even though enrollments

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[8] The Humanities in American Life, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.

in the institutions were increasing. Furthermore, they found the number of humanities courses was getting smaller and so was the number of humanities teachers. Their findings were reported in a series of monographs published by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges and they were summarized in a background paper they wrote for the 1979 AACJC Assembly.[9]

Copy Occupational Strategies

As I recall it now, when Arthur Cohen and his advisory committee looked at the data, showing all of the growing enrollments over in occupational education and the shrinking enrollments in the humanities, our reasoning went something like this: the occupational faculty must be doing something right. Let's analyze what they do and how it might be applied to humanities programs. The ideas we discussed included such things as these (again, as I recall it):

1. Establish an advisory committee (like the occupational programs do) and thereby gain ideas, participation, and support from the community.

2. Use part-time teachers in humanities who are practitioners (like the occupational programs do) and thus build in some additional assurance that the instruction will be up to date with the life of the humanities outside the classroom.

3. Put more emphasis on the job-related aspects of the humanities to show how they can help develop qualities in the student that employers will find attractive (such as the ability to read and write well, to understand

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[9] Arthur Cohen, president, Center for the Study of Humanities, 1047 Gayley Avenue, Suite 205, Los Angeles, California 90024 (213-477-6093). "Reviving the Humanities: Data and Direction," Arthur Cohen and Florence Brawer, Strengthening Humanities in Community Colleges, Roger Yarrington (ed.), Washington, D.C.: AACJC, 1980.

historical, literary, artistic, and ethical concepts, to express ideas well, and the ability to understand and relate well to other people.

4. Get the humanities courses out into the community. Just as the occupational courses are taken into the offices, hospitals, and factories, take the humanities to those same places, plus the public libraries, historical societies, apartment buildings, neighborhood centers, galleries, theaters, and shopping centers. Use the now classic community college strategy of seeing every citizen in the community as a student and offering the courses at times and places convenient for the students.

If this line of thinking has any merit, that is, using some of the successful strategies of occupational educators to strengthen the humanities, then it seems reasonable to me that a community college where occupational programs have become strong by using such strategies would be an ideal place for the humanities to adapt them to their own use.

I've talked mostly about strengthening the humanities in occupational curriculums and about copying some of the successful strategies of occupational programs. Let me mention several other approaches I think can be useful.

Internationalize the Curriculum

Studying the cultures of other countries is a part of the humanities. One way to bring the humanities into every part of the institution is to internationalize the curriculum. By that I mean bringing in at every opportunity a view of how the subject being studied is seen in other cultures of the world.

Broward Community College has adopted this idea as an institutional

policy. College resources will be used to help faculty implement it.

Brevard Community College is one of the leaders in setting up programs to get large numbers of its faculty members overseas every year to enrich their teaching with understanding of how other countries deal with issues related to their disciplines.

Examples of how this can be done: The police science instructor might enrich teaching by visiting Scotland Yard in England. The electronics instructor might enrich teaching by visiting television or calculator laboratories in Japan. The nursing instructor might enrich teaching by visiting clinics in Scandinavia. Automotive instructors might enrich teaching by visiting factories in Italy. Building trades instructors might enrich teaching by visiting ancient cities in Greece. Labor studies instructors might enrich teaching by visiting Poland just now. The possibilities are endless. The point is that this is a strategy that community colleges find effective in helping faculty get a new perspective on the subjects they teach and to bring an additional humanistic view into their classes.

Our communities are increasingly part of a world community and a world economic system. It is an appropriate service to the community to help build understanding of how the community fits into the global society and economy and to share the lessons that can be learned from other cultures.

Moses Koch presented an excellent discussion of the rationale and various models for internationalizing the curriculum in a paper he wrote for a 1978 AACJC Assembly at Wingspread on Internationalizing Community Colleges.[10]

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10 "Internationalizing the Curriculums," Moses Koch, Internationalizing Community Colleges, Roger Yarrington (ed.), Racine, Wisconsin: The Johnson Foundation, 1978.

The recent report of the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies recommends more in-service education opportunities for community college teachers. The report points out that our institutions are now more active in international education and will be responsible for a larger share of such services in the future, especially at the community level. It recommends, in view of community college commitment to citizen education, that our institutions should receive "special attention in expanded international education efforts to reach all citizens."[11]

Use of Television

The use of courses broadcast by television was considered a doubtful experiment only a few years ago. But now a quarter million students a year are taking such courses for credit. More than 400 community colleges are using television courses. The AACJC Task Force on the Uses of Mass Media for Learning has compiled a catalog of 100 high-quality courses produced for national distribution, mostly by community colleges.

There are a number of telecourses that provide an excellent introduction to the humanities and there are additional courses in history, literature, and world religions. The AACJC catalog lists thirty telecourses under the humanities heading.

There are several fine courses that have been produced for broadcast by radio, too. And more are being produced by community colleges.

The experience of many community colleges is that such courses, offered by broadcast television or radio to the community, will attract some students who otherwise might not come to the campus and enroll in a classroom course.

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[11] Strength through Wisdom, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979.

But, having taken a course by television, some of the students gain interest or confidence and enroll in additional courses on campus.

In addition to the students who actually enroll for credit in a telecourse, there are many persons in the community who see the broadcast programs and thus begin to associate quality instruction in the humanities with the community college sponsoring the course. Given the decline of humanities enrollments in community colleges, we need every such association we can encourage and the resulting enrollments we may win.

There are some instructors who feel telecourses threaten classroom enrollments. My feeling is that this is a short-sighted view. Telecourses require the involvement of faculty to meet with students individually and to conduct discussion sessions with groups of students enrolled in the course. Campus faculty are involved. There is opportunity for participation in a new type of teaching-learning experience. Moreover, new students are reached, some of whom may become additional classroom students in other humanities courses.

The AACJC Task Force on the Uses of Mass Media is working to encourage the production of additional high-quality courses for television and radio, to create federal and local policies that facilitate their use, and to build cooperative partnerships between colleges and broadcasters.

Community Education

Last Fall community college enrollments increased by about 10 per cent. According to some educational forecasters, college enrollments are supposed to be dropping because the traditional college-age cohort of the population has begun to dip. But the conventional wisdom has been shown to be wrong.

The reason enrollments are holding up in our institutions is that for many years now community colleges have been providing services, not just to the traditional college-age population, but to all citizens in the community.

The humanities can mirror the enrollment growth in our institutions, if the humanities also are successful in attracting all ages from the community. The use of telecourses is one way to help accomplish this goal. The uses of community advisory committees, like the occupational education people, is another. Building cooperative programs with local agencies and organizations in the humanities is another. All of these are strategies in which the community college has become expert and has used to build community support. Now, I believe it is the turn of the humanities faculties to utilize these proven practices, not only to attract new students, but in the process of offering new services, to strenthen, revitalize, and envigorate their programs.

Teachers of the humanities, perhaps more than any other college teachers, have been conditioned to think of themselves in front of a classroom of traditional college students. I would like to suggest two new, additional, ways for community college humanities professors to see themselves:

1. As a teacher of the humanities at the "postsecondary" level -- using "postsecondary" to mean an age level. That is, all of those persons in the community who are above the secondary school ages are your potential students. What opportunities are there to take instruction in the humanities into the apartment buildings, the retirement homes, the prisons, the offices,

and the factories? Yes, the factories. One of the facsinating things we have found in our work with labor unions is that blue collar workers express a high interest in taking classes in subjects not related to their jobs. The subjects they specify often are disciplines in the humanities. Life-long learning for all persons in our society is becoming a reality. Humanities teachers who make themselves experts in how to take the humanities to all ages in many community settings will find plenty of teaching to do.

2. As a teacher of the humanities using his or her discipline to assist in community development. AACJC has adopted a new mission statement for the 80's indicating the work of community colleges is to provide life-long learning for individual and community development. In a new book published by AACJC, Edmund Gleazer suggests the community college mission for the 80's is to "facilitate lifelong learning with community as process and product."[12] However you say it, the thought that keeps coming up as we think through our work for the years just ahead is that we will be engaged in both individual and community development. Teachers in the humanities disciplines have traditionally thought of themselves as engaged in individual development. Most of the cases made for the humanities stress the benefits to the individual. And such benefits should be stressed. But, there is a growing awareness that just as we have stressed education as a means of development for less-developed countries, we need to stress it as a means for development for our own communities. What we are talking about is looking for creative and useful ways to apply every discipline to the issues, needs, concerns that exist in communities. Our occupational education

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[12] Edmund Gleazer, Values, Vision & Vitality, Washington, D.C.: AACJC, 1980.

programs have long been seen in this light, specifically as educational programs addressing unemployment and producing needed human resources for local business and industry. Our science curriculums have long been sold as our answers to local and national problems -- training scientific minds to keep up with scientific research, keeping us up-to-date in technology, competitive in a world marketplace, solving the problems of production, environment, etc. What are the problems in your community? Reducing crime? Improving services to the aging? Increasing employment? How can the humanities disciplines be applied to these problems? These are all human problems. The humanities should be prepared to address them. It is entirely appropriate for a teacher in the humanities in a community college to think through and experiment in ways to use the discipline for community development.

Application to Leadership

I would like to mention briefly something we are doing at AACJC as a case example of what I am suggesting to you: In June we will sponsor an Institute for Advanced Leadership for community college presidents. It will not be an institute on how to manage a college. It will be an institute, using the disciplines of the humanities, to look at community development needs in the 1980s and the ways in which community college presidents can provide leadership through their institutions in meeting such needs. To help us do that we will enlist some outstanding resource persons to help us look at concepts of leadership in history, in literature, in religion and to apply those concepts to the environments in which community colleges will find themselves in this decade.

Humanists can help us all, whether we are administrators, occupational educators, community services specialists, counselors, whatever. Whether we focus on the individual or the community (and, hopefully, it will be both), we are working with persons. Extending the humanities from the classrooms to every facet of the community college will make both the institution better and the humanities better.

I would like to repeat a few sentences from the remarks I made here two years ago at the community forums workshop mentioned earlier. My mind is running along the same line it was then:

> "The 'humanities' may be defined as a group of <u>disciplines</u> Concerned with human beings; 'humanists' as <u>persons</u> concerned with human beings.
>
> "Community colleges are <u>institutions</u> concerned with human beings. Our colleges evolved into their present forms by being open door, low cost, accessible to everyone: all economic levels, all levels of ability, all ages.
>
> "What better place for experimentation with new ways to involve more persons in the humanities?"

A Check List

Let me summarize by giving a check list of programs that may be found in an institution at work on strengthening the humanities:

1. There will be an advisory committee for the college's total humanities program, drawn from the community and including practicing writers, editors, historians, philosophers, theologians, librarians, etc., --

whatever "practitioners," employers, and patrons of the humanities there may be in the community. There also will be persons representing the local agencies and community organizations (libraries, historical societies, etc.), concerned with the humanistic disciplines.

2. The college will have cooperative arrangements with such local employers, agencies, and community organizations for joint sponsorship of activities and programs to advance interest in the humanities: poetry readings, literary publications, theater groups, history clubs and tours, etc.

3. Humanities faculty will be encouraged not only to excell in traditional teaching modes but also to explore such community connections, to develop community education and service programs such as community forums using the humanities to inform the discussions of current and local issues.

4. Practitioner-professors will be recruited from the community to teach part-time and help assure that the humanities instruction is tied in even more closely to the community.

5. Interdisciplinary courses will be developed especially for occupational education students so they can receive a coherent introduction to humanities disciplines in the limited time they have for study outside their technical specialty. Such courses also will show the possible connections between the humanities and the occupations for which they are preparing.

6. Humanities professors and occupational education professors will team up to inject humanities modules into occupational courses -- such as the art teacher exposing welding students to the concepts of metal sculpture. And, by the same token, occupational teachers will inject modules on technology into humanities courses to help achieve what C.P. Snow and others have argued for: humanists that are literate in technology.

7. Telecourses in the humanities will be used to reach the homebound and the citizen who needs to build confidence in academic ability before coming to the campus for classroom courses. And telecourses will be used to expose an even wider circle in the community to the humanities and to the fact that the community college offers excellent instruction in the humanities disciplines.

8. There will be an institutional commitment to internationalizing the curriculum, offering interested instructors opportunity to enrich their teaching by having international experiences related to their courses. Students will be encouraged to include the study of other cultures in their programs.

There are many other suggestions that could be made. I hope the ones I have made have stimulated additional ideas in your minds. And I hope you will want to work on those ideas and see which ones you can use here at Delgado.

Frankly, I think the starting point is simply for teachers in the humanities disciplines and in the occupational programs, and persons in the administration, to talk to each other and develop a collegiality marked by an eagerness to share information and ideas that will help professors and administrators to be experts in their special fields and literate in the fields of their colleagues.

That is the spirit that I detect at work at Delgado and in this faculty orientation program. I commend you for it and affirm that you are doing what other good community colleges are doing and should be doing: working on improving occupational education and the humanities at the same time. The whole curriculum will benefit from the effort.

Best wishes.

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